



MAIL STOP
AMENDMENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: A.K. Forsythe Attorney Docket No.: GTDV120953
Application No.: 10/688,579 Art Unit: 3677 / Confirmation No: 2274
Filed: October 17, 2003 Examiner: A.L. Jackson
Title: KNOB ATTACHMENT ASSEMBLY

RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION MAILED ON SEPTEMBER 21, 2005

Seattle, Washington 98101

March 21, 2006

TO THE COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS:

Claims 1-33 are pending in the above-referenced patent application. In an Office Action mailed on September 21, 2005, all claims were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e). Applicant respectfully disagrees. Before addressing the substantive aspects of the foregoing rejection, embodiments of the present disclosure are set forth in the paragraphs that follow.

As may be best understood by reference to Figure 3 of the application as filed, the present disclosure is generally directed to a knob attachment assembly (100) that includes an actuation member (106) coupled to a housing. The actuation member (106) includes a first engagement surface (140). The knob attachment assembly also includes a gripping device (104) having a first interference surface (158) (shown in phantom). The gripping device (104) is selectively couplable to the actuation member (106) and positionable between a locked position, wherein the gripping device (104) is coupled to the actuation member (106) by "interference of the first surface with the first interference surface." This aspect is expressly recited in Claims 1 and 13, as originally filed.

A second knob assembly constructed in accordance with aspects of the present disclosure include a gripping device (104) having a first protrusion (128). The knob attachment assembly also includes a locking member (150) coupled to either the actuation member or the gripping

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device. The knob attachment assembly is actuatable into a locked position, wherein the gripping device (104) is coupled to the actuation member (106) by engagement of the first protrusion (128) against a limit stop (122) and engagement of the locking member (150) against the first projection (130) or the first protrusion (128). This locking position is generally recited in Claim 24, as originally filed. Claim 1, 13, or 24 is taught or suggested by the cited prior art.

As briefly noted above, Claims 1, 13, and 24, as well as certain dependent claims stemming therefrom, stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,709,188, issued Ushimaru. The Office Action sets forth the position that Ushimaru discloses a knob unit that is positionable into a locked position, "wherein the gripping device (25) is coupled to the actuation member (20) by interference of the first engagement surface (22a) with the first interference surface (26a)." (Parenthetical numeric references added.) Applicant respectfully notes that the Office Action has mistakenly described locking aspects of Ushimaru.

Specifically, Ushimaru fails to teach or suggest a knob attachment assembly that includes a gripping device that is coupled to an actuation member by interference of first engagement surfaces with a first interference surface, as generally set forth in Claims 1 and 13. Also, Ushimaru fails to teach or suggest a knob attachment assembly that includes a gripping device coupled to an actuation member by engagement of a first protrusion against a limit stop and engagement of a locking member against the first projection or first protrusion, as generally set forth in Claim 24. Instead, Ushimaru teaches a projection sized to be received in a bore to couple to two pieces of the knob together.

As may be best seen by referring to Figure 4, Ushimaru discloses a knob 25 that includes a projection 26 having an L-shaped downwardly protrusion portion 26a. Ushimaru also discloses a fitting member 20 that includes a plurality of guides 22 having an upper portion designated as a

guide face 22a. It is noted that the guides 22 are used to guide the projections 26 into gaps 23 located on the fitting member 20. Ushimaru expressly teaches the following:

Then, as the knob 25 is pressed in the axial direction of the shaft member 1b, the tops 26a of the projections 26 are pressed against the inclined guide faces 22a, resulting in, for instance, clockwise turning of the fitting member 20 and shifting of the tops 26a to the positions of the gaps 23 of the fitting member 20. That is, the shaft member 1b is rotated by pressing the knob 25 in the axial direction.

Col. 9, lines 13-20.

Thus, Ushimaru does not teach a locking feature, wherein "the gripping devices coupled to the actuation member by *interference* of the first engagement surface with the first interference surface," as suggested in the Office Action. (Emphasis added.) Instead, Ushimaru expressly teaches that engagement of the "first fitting portion 24 with the hooks 27 and the fitting of the tops 26a of the projections 26 *into the first through holes 21c cause the knob 25 and the fitting member 20 to be coupled to each other.*" (Col. 9, lines 31-35, emphasis added.)

Ushimaru further notes that the "projections and the through holes become opposite each other to enable the knob and the fitting member to be *coupled* to each other *after* the projections are fitted into the through hole." (Col. 9, line 65 through Col. 10, line 1, emphasis added.) Finally, it is also noted that Ushimaru expressly teaches that the "knob or fitting member is rotated so as to enable the projections to approach the base and, *after* the projections are positioned in the gaps, the knob and the fitting member are enabled to be coupled to each other." (Col. 10, lines 45-48, emphasis added.)

Accordingly, Ushimaru fails to teach or suggest the locking arrangement recited in Claims 1, 13, and 24 of the application as filed. Accordingly, the rejections of Claims 1-33 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Ushimaru is improper and should be withdrawn.

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Applicant notes that in the conclusion section of the Office Action the patent references Keith and Harmon et al. were noted, without comment, as "capable of meeting the limitations of applicant's base claim." Applicant disagrees with this position for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to Ushimaru. Specifically, applicant notes that Harmon et al. fails to teach or suggest the interference locking arrangement of Claims 1, 13, and 24. Similarly, Keith also fails to teach or suggest the locking arrangement of Claims 1, 13, and 24. Accordingly, applicant respectfully submits that Keith and Harmon et al. fail to teach or suggest the embodiments of Claims 1, 13, and 24.

In view of the foregoing comments, applicant respectfully submits that Claims 1-13 are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned with any questions regarding this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: March 21, 2006 Carolyn L. Smith

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